IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 5302 of 2003

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the concerned Magistrate/Magistrates,Judge/Judges,Tribunal/Tribunals? : NO

MANISHBHAI THAKORBHAI PATEL

Versus

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE FOR THE CITY OF SURAT

Appearance:

1. Special Civil Application No. 5302 of 2003

MR ANIL S DAVE for Petitioner No. 1

MR KAMEN N SHUKLA for Petitioner No. 1

MR RC KODEKAR, AGP for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

Date of decision: 28/07/2003

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The detenu has been detained under the provisions of Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985

(hereinafter referred to as `the Act of 1985') by the order dated 8-2-2003 passed by the Police Commissioner, Surat City and he has been declared as bootlegger.

2. It is now well settled that unless the activities of a person as bootlegger has disturbed the maintenance of public order, he cannot be detained under the Act. Reliance is placed on a decision of the case of Piyush Kantilal Mehta Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad & Ors. reported in AIR 1989 SC 491.

3. I have heard learned advocate for the petitioner at length and learned AGP for the respondents. I have also perused the material on record. Learned advocate for the petitioner has mainly concentrated his arguments on the point that last offence registered against the detenu on 7-12-2002 while the order of detention was passed on 8-2-2003 and hence, there is a delay of approximately two months in passing the order. Learned AGP has fairly admitted the same. Learned counsel for the petitioner has relied upon a judgment delivered by this Court reported in 1997(1) G.L.H. page 381 in the case of Elesh Nandubhai Patel Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City and Ors. more particularly at para 21 which reads as under:

> "There appears to be some substance in the contention of the petitioner that these two unregistered cases have been referred only with a view to cover up the gap or to give life to a stale case. This unexplained delay makes a ground of detention not proximate, vitiating the order of detention itself. If I am to buttress my findings, I would say the reference may be made to the decision of the Supreme Court in Anand Prakash V. State of U.P. reported in AIR 1990 SC 516 and Pradeep Nilkanth Vs. S. Ramamurthy reported in 1993(2) Suppl. SCC 61."

4. It appears that last offence registered against the petitioner was on 7-12-2002 while the order of detention was passed on 8-2-2003 and hence, there is a delay of approximately two months in passing the order. No satisfactory explanation is forthcoming for such a delay caused in passing the order of detention. Therefore, in view of the above judgment relied upon by the learned advocate for the petitioner, the order of detention is illegal and the same cannot be sustained. Learned advocate for the petitioner does not press any other points.

5. The petition is allowed. The impugned order of detention dated 8-2-2003 passed against the detenu is hereby quashed and set aside. The detenu is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other case. Rule is made absolute accordingly. Direct service is permitted.

(R.P.DHOLAKIA,J.)

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